

House Passes H.R. 4137, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act

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(Washington, D.C.) - U.S. Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ) today voted for legislation to address the soaring price of college tuition and to remove other obstacles that make it harder for qualified students to go to college.

The House in a bipartisan vote approved the College Opportunity and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137), which would reform and strengthen the nation's higher education programs to ensure that they operate in the best interests of students and families. The Act would streamline the application process for federal student aid, strengthen college readiness and support programs for minority and lower income students, and increase college aid for veterans and military families.

The legislation is the second major step that the Democratic Congress has taken to make college more affordable and accessible for all qualified students. Last year, Congress enacted into law a \$20 billion increase in college financial aid over the next five years, the largest increase in student aid since the G.I. Bill of 1944.

"We continue to work on behalf of the American people to make sure that all Americans have the opportunity to attend college. Monetary considerations should not be the determining factor of who does and doesn't pursue a higher degree," said Sires.

The bill would address these rising prices by encouraging colleges to rein in price increases, ensuring that states maintain their commitments to higher education funding, and providing students and families with consumer friendly information on college pricing and the factors driving tuition increases.

"Families need to be able to access all the information about the costs of attending college to be able to make informed decisions about seeking an advanced degree," said Sires.

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